

LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY A HOLIDAY IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

FEBRUARY 5, 1924.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed.

Mr. BLANTON, from the Committee on the District of Columbia, submitted the following

MINORITY REPORT.

[To accompany H. R. 20.]

I am sorry that I can not agree with the committee favorably reporting this bill. It was thoroughly debated in the Sixty-seventh Congress, and on February 13, 1922, by a very decided vote, the House struck out its enacting clause by a vote of 162 against the bill, while only 89 Members were in favor of the bill, and at the time such vote was taken there were 170 more Republican Members than Democrats. Hence there was nothing partisan in the vote.

Just as I said then in that debate, I now repeat, that if the immortal Lincoln were present to-day he would state without hesitation that the greatest curse of this Nation at the present hour is idleness and a want of full production. It is a failure on the part of Americans to produce to the limit of their possibilities, and Lincoln would tell us that it is the duty of every American to produce to the maximum of his abilities and opportunities.

I will join my colleagues in every proper method consistent with the cardinal principles of his life to do all honor possible to the undying memory of this great man. But what can we do now to honor Lincoln? Provide another gala picnic day for carousal? Abolish all of the accustomed ceremonial exercises, which for nearly half a century, have been observed throughout this city in all the departments of Government? Abolish such accustomed exercises in all of our public schools, where for the education of the rising generation opportunity is afforded for his many virtues to be extolled. Are we thus to honor him? Are we to honor him by closing down all these accustomed exercises, and saying to the 437,000 people in Washington, go forth to the innumerable pleasure resorts on this momentous day and be gay in utter abandon. If this is

the way we are to honor Lincoln the uninformed rising generation will soon forget him.

The martyred Lincoln gave his life for his country on April 15, 1865. Our District Committee is asking the Congress to convict itself of continued dereliction of duty for the past 59 years, for if passing this bill would honor Lincoln, the honor should have been conferred a half century ago, and every Congress for over 50 years has been recreant in its duty.

A measure to do honor to the memory of a man should be consistent with the character and life of the man, and all of us know that Lincoln was an indefatigable worker, a man who believed in effort, a man who believed in accomplishment, a man who hated idleness.

LIST OF NUMEROUS NONWORK DAYS STAGGERING NOW.

Have you ever thought of just how many nonwork days out of the 365 there are already upon which our Government employees here in Washington do not work each year? With a few exceptions, they all have the 52 Sundays each year away from work; then they have 30 full work days vacation each year on full pay; that is, these 30 days vacation does not count any Sunday or regular holiday in it, but must be 30 full work days vacation; then they are allowed 30 work days sick leave on doctor's certificate that they were unable to work, with no salary deduction for such absence; and section 1389 of the Code of Law for the District of Columbia provides the following special holidays: January 1, called New Year; February 22, which is Washington's birthday; May 30, which is Decoration Day; September 1, which is Labor Day; and December 25, which is Christmas; then after 12 o'clock noon on every Saturday during the months of July, August, and September is allowed as a holiday; then each Thanksgiving Day; then each Inauguration Day; then a half-day before each Christmas; and all special occasions of celebration are observed by the departments turning out. And every holiday, or nonwork day, costs the Government quite a huge sum, for the loss of work of such day by its many thousands of employees must be made up, which necessitates the employing of a corresponding additional number of employees to make up the work to be lost by each holiday. In the history that is to follow of our great Republic, which is stable and permanent in its structure, we may expect many great men, none of whom would feel honored by the thought that we would revere their memory through a day of idleness devoted to pleasures and fancy. Under our law, whenever any regular holiday comes on Sunday, the succeeding day is observed, so that no holidays are ever lost. Our God, whom Lincoln worshipped, said, "Six days shalt thou labor," and that divine admonition meant maximum production during six days of each week of seven.

If by passing this bill it would cause the 437,000 people here to more reverently observe February 12 in some way that would do real honor to this great American, I would favor it. But its passage would merely shut down all business, close up all schools, and send 437,000 people hurrying off to various places of pleasure, to dissipate another joy day, soon forgetting in whose honor it was intended. There is more honor done Lincoln's memory by Members of Congress regu-

larly assembling here in this House each year, listening to the earnest dissertations on his unselfish life and lovable character, than there would be in selfishly enjoying the pleasures of another idle day. Ah, the real reverence, after all, is within our breasts.

President Lincoln was a frugal man. He abhorred the useless. In our feeble efforts to do him honor many of his portraits adorn the walls of our public buildings. Many valuable busts have been set on pedestals. His likenesses have been preserved in bronze and marble, adding solemn and dignified attractiveness to many of our parks. Lincoln Park, with its descriptive monument, beautifies East Capitol Street, leading thence direct to the main steps of the Capitol itself, where Presidents are inaugurated. And the magnificent marble Lincoln Memorial, with its wonderful reflecting pools, the like of which has never before memorialized mortal man, comes nearer doing fitting honor to this great American. A bawdy, sordid, selfish, idle, pleasure-seeking, pleasure-absorbing holiday will tend merely to cheapen all that has been done to honor heretofore.

Some Members may imagine that to oppose this bill will cause criticism, or a charge against them of a want of appreciation of Lincoln. Such a choosing of the path of least resistance would evidence moral cowardice, something that Lincoln detested. Why, at a time when it appeared that I was the only man opposing this measure in the Sixty-seventh Congress, when it came up in the House for passage on February 13, 1922, our former distinguished colleague, the Hon. James R. Mann, of Illinois, who loved Lincoln, who loved his country, who was a statesman, and who for years worked indefatigably in the House of Representatives, dying in harness, came to my rescue, and prevented this bill from passing.

To show that he would fight for anything that he thought would honor the memory of Lincoln, I quote the following colloquy from that debate:

MR. BLANTON. Do you know what else we are attempting to do in Lincoln's name? You know you can conjure with names. Some people over here in Virginia across the river want a new bridge. Some people here in the District of Columbia joined them in wanting a new bridge. They have been wanting it a long time; they have been agitating it a long time; they have been using propaganda for it a long time. They have been appealing to the Executive and to the Congressmen and Senators for some way to get that new bridge and have the United States pay for it. Just a few minutes ago the messenger from the United States Senate stepped into that door and brought back to us a bill, a supply measure for the executive and independent establishments of the Government. In that very bill that he announced there is contained an amendment that was placed there by the Senate without any authority of law, because it is legislation on an appropriation bill—placed there by the distinguished body at the other end of the Capitol—appropriating \$25,000 to make an initial survey for this desired bridge that is to cost \$10,000,000 of the people's money.

It is done in the name of Lincoln. In the name of Lincoln it is brought in in such a way that if anybody rises against it somebody who wants the bridge will say, "You are not willing to do honor to the memory of Lincoln"; one who opposes it is placed in the attitude of not being willing to do honor to the great American. You can let that \$25,000 camel's nose get by you, that is going to end in a \$10,000,000 spending of the people's money out of the Treasury, to build an unnecessary bridge.

MR. MANN. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

MR. BLANTON. Yes.

MR. MANN. Has not the camel's nose already gotten by us, by past legislation on the subject of this bridge?

MR. BLANTON. Well, it has not gotten by us so far but what we can kick it out from under the tent without doing injury to the Treasury.

Mr. MANN. Well, I doubt, if the camel's nose is in, you can get it out.

Mr. BLANTON. You can get it out if the gentleman from Illinois would just get back some of that old-time vigor of his that fights unnecessary appropriations, the kind that I used to read about in the newspapers concerning him before I came to Congress.

Mr. MANN. Well, I am going to get back that vigor to fight for this appropriation. [Applause.]

Mr. BLANTON. I know. Unfortunately for the people of the United States, the gentleman from Illinois has been won over on this bridge proposition. I tell you the propagandists of the United States have learned whom to see when they want something to pass the House of Representatives. If I wanted something to pass here and pass quickly with as little opposition as possible, I would go straight to the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. Mann] first and try to win him, and when I had won him, I would have won my battle.

At the crucial moment the distinguished gentleman from Illinois [Mr. Mann] took the floor, and defeated the bill by an overwhelming vote. Let me quote from the Record just what he said:

Mr. MANN. Mr. Chairman, I was a young boy when Lincoln was President. My father was in the Army—had been. I remember as distinctly as though it were yesterday the man who came riding up fast on horseback to our farm to inform my father that Lincoln had been assassinated. I remember the grief and the tears and the sorrow of our family at that time. I come from the State which gave Lincoln to the country. I come from the city where Lincoln was first nominated for the Presidency. I have the utmost reverence for his memory and admiration for his character. I was largely instrumental in this House in securing provision for the erection of the Lincoln Memorial over here to the west, which I think is the most beautiful structure in all the world. I remember in discussing the question before the House, in urging the House to provide for a memorial in the District, instead of a roadway between here and Gettysburg, that I suggested to the House that I could see in my mind's eye in the not distant future the Capitol Building representing the country and just to the west the beautiful Grant Memorial, and farther on the Mall, until you came to the great Washington Monument, and beyond that I could see, I thought, a beautiful Lincoln Memorial structure, with its reflection in the water which would be there, and still on beyond I could see a bridge across the Potomac River which could connect us with the resting place of the Army and Navy, Arlington Cemetery. [Applause.] I said that I could go further. I said that I could see, I thought, a road going still farther and reaching to Richmond, Va., and at the other end of that road I could see, if I lived, a statue of the beloved of the South, Jefferson Davis, in complete feeling of reconciliation between the North and the South. [Applause.] I was taken to task for making those remarks by some of the dear old Grand Army of the Republic men in my district, who did me the honor in the moment of resentment to withdraw my honorary membership in one of the posts. There is nothing they could do to me which would affect my love or veneration for them, and they are all my friends now, but that of itself showed that there was not yet a complete wiping out of the hatred of the Civil War. I am in favor of wiping out as fast as it is humanly possible all of the soreness and hatred caused by the Civil War.

But, Mr. Chairman, although I come from Lincoln's State, although I revere his memory and character, I can not believe that a bill like this before us will in the slightest degree enhance the value of the memory of Lincoln to anyone in America or elsewhere.

We have New Year's Day, generally observed; business places usually close. We have Memorial Day; business usually closed; people go to the ball games and elsewhere. We have the Fourth of July; business usually closed. We have Labor Day; business usually closed. We have Thanksgiving Day; business usually closed. We have Christmas Day; business usually closed. We have another holiday generally throughout the country in most of the States, February 12, when business is not closed. The banks close and the stock exchanges close. The Government offices may close in some places, but business is not closed. We have February 22; business is not closed on that day generally throughout the country. The banks close; they have to under the law. The stock exchanges close because the banks close. The people observe those days to a very large extent now, not because there is any legal holiday, and the only purpose that I can see for making a legal holiday of Lincoln's birthday in the

District of Columbia is while business outside the District of Columbia on Lincoln's birthday does not close, generally in the District of Columbia all the public offices will close and the stores will keep open. That is the purpose of it, and to the reverence of Lincoln—not at all. We have a good many holidays. It is proposed by some gentlemen to make Armistice Day a holiday. It may be done. There are a great many men who have been distinguished enough in the country, if it becomes a habit, to make their birthdays holidays. It will not benefit them. It does not add anything to the reverence of the people. There is absolutely no occasion for it, except some gentlemen of the District of Columbia who would like to be let out of work another day in the year organized the propaganda to have another legal holiday. When they get that they will have another one they want. I think it is time to stop the misuse of the name of Lincoln to steal things out for private interest. [Applause.]

And when the debate on this bill was concluded in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, its enacting clause was stricken out by the committee, as shown by the record, which I quote:

Mr. FOCHT. Mr. Chairman, I move, if gentlemen do not care to take any more time, that the debate close, and that the Clerk read the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

"Be it enacted, etc., That the 12th day of February in each year, being the anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln, is hereby made a legal holiday within the District of Columbia, to be known as Lincoln's Birthday, and in its observance and effect it shall be subject to all provisions of law applicable to holidays within said District."

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. Focht] is recognized.

Mr. MANN. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike out the enacting clause.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Illinois moves to strike out the enacting clause. The question is on agreeing to that motion.

The question was taken, and the Chairman announced that the "ayes" appeared to have it.

Mr. FOCHT. A division, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. A division is demanded.

The committee divided; and there were—ayes 37, noes 17.

Mr. BLANTON. Mr. Chairman, I presume the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. Mann] will make the motion to rise.

Mr. MANN. Mr. Chairman, I move that the committee rise and report the action of the committee to the House.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Illinois moves that the committee rise and report the action of the committee to the House. The question is on agreeing to that motion.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly the committee rose; and the Speaker having resumed the chair, Mr. Lehlbach, Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that committee, having under consideration the bill (H. R. 2310) to declare Lincoln's birthday a legal holiday, had directed him to report that the committee had recommended that the bill be amended by striking out the enacting clause.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from New Jersey reports that the committee having under consideration the bill H. R. 2310 had directed him to report the same back to the House with the recommendation that it be amended by striking out the enacting clause thereof.

And the House of Representatives likewise struck out its enacting clause, for let me quote from the Record what the actual vote was:

Mr. MANN. Mr. Speaker, I move the previous question.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Illinois moves the previous question.

The previous question was ordered.

The SPEAKER. The question is on concurring in the action of the committee to strike out the enacting clause.

The question was taken, and the Speaker announced that the "ayes" appeared to have it.

Mr. FOCHT. Mr. Speaker, I make the point of order that there is no quorum present, and I object to the vote. No; I will first ask for a division.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman withdraws the point of no quorum, and asks for a division.

The House divided; and there were—ayes 42, noes 22.

Mr. FOCHT. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote, and make the point that there is no quorum present.

The SPEAKER. It is clear that there is no quorum present. The Doorkeeper will close the doors, the Sergeant at Arms will notify the absentees, and the Clerk will call the roll. As many as favor the action of the committee in striking out the enacting clause of the bill H. R. 2310 will, when their names are called, answer "yea"; those opposed will answer "nay."

The question was taken; and there were—yeas 162, nays 89, answered "present" 1, not voting 178, as follows:

[Roll No. 65.]

YEAS—162.

Anthony	Dickinson	Lea, Calif.	Sanders, Ind.
Aswell	Dominick	Lee, Ga.	Sanders, N. Y.
Bacharach	Doughton	Lehlbach	Sanders, Tex.
Beck	Drane	Linthicum	Sandlin
Begg	Dunbar	Logan	Scott, Mich.
Bell	Elliott	Lowrey	Scott, Tenn.
Black	Ellis	Luce	Sears
Bland, Va.	Evans	Luhning	Shelton
Blanton	Fairfield	Lyon	Shreve
Boies	Free	McClintic	Sisson
Bowling	Freemen	McCormick	Snell
Box	French	McDuffie	Steagall
Brand	Fulmer	McFadden	Stedman
Briggs	Funk	McPherson	Stephens
Browne, Wis.	Garner	MacGregor	Stevenson
Buchanan	Garrett, Tenn.	Mann	Stoll
Bulwinkle	Glynn	Merritt	Strong, Kans.
Burdick	Glynn	Michener	Summers, Wash.
Burtness	Graham, Ill.	Moore, Va.	Sumners, Tex.
Byrnes, S. C.	Greene, Mass.	Moore, Ind.	Swank
Byrns, Tenn.	Hammer	Mott	Taylor, Ark.
Cannon	Hardy, Colo.	Nelson, A. P.	Temple
Carter	Hardy, Tex.	Newton, Minn.	Tillman
Christopherson	Hersey	Oldfield	Tincher
Clague	Hicks	Overstreet	Tyson
Clark, Fla.	Hoch	Padgett	Vestal
Clouse	Huddleston	Park, Ga.	Volstead
Cole, Iowa	Hudspeth	Parks, Ark.	Walsh
Collins	Jacoway	Pou	Ward, N. C.
Connally, Tex.	Jeffers, Ala.	Pringey	Wason
Connell	Johnson, Miss.	Quin	Weaver
Cooper, Wis.	Johnson, Wash.	Radcliffe	Webster
Copley	Jones, Pa.	Raker	White, Me.
Coughlin	Jones, Tex.	Ramseyer	Williamson
Cramton	Kincheloe	Rankin	Wilson
Crisp	King	Rayburn	Wingo
Cullen	Kirkpatrick	Reavis	Wood, Ind.
Curry	Knutson	Reece	Woodyard
Dale	Lanham	Rogers	Wyant
Davis, Tenn.	Larsen, Ga.	Rouse	
Dempsey	Layton	Rucker	

NAYS—89.

Ackerman	Fairchild	Kline, Pa.	Reed, N. Y.
Andrews, Nebr.	Fenn	Kopp	Reed, W. Va.
Appleby	Focht	Lampert	Rhodes
Arentz	Fordney	Lazaro	Ricketts
Atkeson	Foster	Leatherwood	Riordan
Barbour	Frothingham	Little	Roach
Bixler	Fuller	Longworth	Slemp
Brooks, Ill.	Gahn	McLaughlin, Mich.	Smith, Idaho
Brown, Tenn.	Gerner	Magee	Smith, Mich.
Burton	Gilbert	Maloney	Smithwick
Butler	Griest	Mapes	Stafford
Cable	Harrison	Millsbaugh	Sweet
Carew	Hawes	Moore, Ohio	Swing
Chalmers	Hayden	Morgan	Tague
Chindblom	Hickey	Murphy	Taylor, N. J.
Colton	Himes	Nelson, J. M.	Ten Eyck
Crago	Kearns	Norton	Towner
Dallinger	Kiess	O'Connor	Vaile
Darrow	Kindred	Osborne	Watson
Davis, Minn.	Kinkaid	Patterson, N. J.	Woodruff
Dowell	Kissel	Petersen	
Dupré	Klecza	Rainey, Ill.	
Edmonds	Kline, N. Y.	Ransley	

And the enacting clause of the bill was thus stricken out by the House of Representatives on the 13th day of February, 1922, by a vote of 162 to kill the bill and only 89 for the bill. And the preceding day was Sunday, February 12, Lincoln's birthday, yet the bill was thus killed by this big majority. And at that time there were 302 Republican Members of the House of Representatives and only 132 Democrats, evidencing no partisanship whatever.

You find voting to kill the bill such strong, orthodox, life long Republicans as Uncle Joe Cannon; Greene, of Massachusetts; Hersey, of Maine; Doctor Layton, of Delaware; Doctor Temple; James R. Mann; Will Wood and Moores, of Indiana; Graham, of Illinois; Anthony, Hoch, Strong, and Tincher, of Kansas; Sanders, of Indiana; Vestal, the present Republican whip; Snell, the present chairman of the Committee on Rules; Luce and Joe Walsh, of Massachusetts; Lehlbach, of New Jersey; White, of Maine; Rogers, of Massachusetts; Jim Begg, of Ohio; Cooper, of Wisconsin; Newton, of Minnesota; and many others of equal prominence, whose love, respect, and loyalty for Lincoln can not be questioned. They realized that another holiday would in no wise honor Lincoln. And they were not afraid to vote according to their judgment and convictions. They proved that Congress has not been guilty of laches during the past 59 years. They proved that Congress has not been derelict in its duty to Lincoln. To pass this bill will convict Congress of such derelictions. I respectfully submit to my colleagues that this bill should not be passed.

THOMAS L. BLANTON,
Member of the Committee.

